

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1458

By Cobb

A RESOLUTION to honor Earl and Lavada Carlton, proprietors of Carlton's General Store, upon 60 years of serving the Rover community.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this Body should pay tribute to those retail merchants who have become an integral part of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, one such worthy mercantile concern is Carlton's General Store, which has been the bedrock of commerce in the Rover community of northwestern Bedford County for some 60 years; and

WHEREAS, Carlton's General Store is owned and operated by Earl and Lavada Carlton, who are continuing the legacy of Earl's parents, the late Clayton and Maggie Carlton, in running a country store where buyin' and sellin' sometimes take a back seat to lyin' and tellin', stories that is; and

WHEREAS, in fact, the Carlton family has been engaged in the grocery business for nearly 75 years, as Clayton Carlton opened his first store in the Last Chance community on November 12, 1931; and

WHEREAS, the very epicenter of social and commercial life in Rover, Carlton's General Store is a friendly place where you can purchase peanuts and a soft drink (still in a glass bottle), be entertained, instructed, and informed by the denizens of the Bullpen, or seek the sage advice and counsel of Mr. Carlton on subjects ranging from agriculture to Zen; and

WHEREAS, an appreciative Rover community, which was in great need of a store, witnessed the grand opening of Carlton's General Store in April 1946, in a brand new building located on the old Lena Chick place at the intersection of U.S. Highway 41-A and Kingdom Road; and

WHEREAS, a young Earl Carlton first operated the store by himself, but he was soon joined by Mr. Clayton and Mrs. Maggie, who had just sold their other store in Jungletown; and

WHEREAS, together the Carltons kept their store running like a well-oiled machine, with Earl driving the peddling wagon, but something was still missing; on March 30, 1947, Earl expanded the family by marrying Lavada Crockett, and the Carlton legacy was assured; and

WHEREAS, after 32 memorable years as retail merchants, the elder Carltons officially sold the store to Earl and Lavada in 1963, although Mr. Clayton continued to work in the store for years afterward; and

WHEREAS, relying on the wisdom of the old adage: "You can't do business from an empty wagon," Earl Carlton firmly believed in maintaining sufficient inventory to satisfy the wants and needs of his fellow Roverites and discerning customers from miles beyond; and

WHEREAS, some might even say that Mr. Carlton was overzealous in his efforts to keep the store fully stocked, as the plethora of building, plumbing, and electrical supplies, air conditioners, clothing material, shoes, sporting goods, household items, and literally thousands of other goods obtained by Earl on his weekly trips to Nashville, not to mention actual groceries, necessitated at least four additions to Carlton' General Store over the years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Carlton's proclivity for acquisition has been the basis of several mottoes for the store, including "We Sell Most Anything" and "If We Don't Have It, It's Hard To Find," the latter slogan causing some loyal customers to opine that even if Carlton's did have it, it was still hard to find; and

WHEREAS, this slight difficulty in locating merchandise led Mr. Carlton to dub his business The Store of Three Wonders: (1) You wonder if we have it; (2) I wonder where it is; and (3) Everybody wonders, How does he find it?; and

WHEREAS, as they celebrate 60 years of faithful service to the good people of Rover, Earl and Lavada Carlton are enjoying what should be the golden years of their retirement by continuing to do the one thing they have always loved doing, namely operating Carlton's General Store; and

WHEREAS, devotion and resolve such as that exhibited by Earl and Lavada Carlton are indeed rare and should be recognized by this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED
FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE
CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Earl and Lavada Carlton upon their
meritorious service to the Rover community for the past 60 years as proprietors of Carlton's
General Store, where Rover's elite still meet to see and be seen.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we take the liberty of congratulating Mr. and Mrs.
Carlton on the celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary just a wee bit early and extend to
them our best wishes for much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared
for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.